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In This Issue

READ IT HERE FIRST!

- The Inside Story of How the US and UK Tried for Years to Ensure the PanAm 103 Case Would Never Come to Trial in a Fair Courtroom Because They Knew They Couldn't Make the Case Stick

- How Qaddafi, Helped by Mandela and a Canny Scots Lawyer, Called the West's Bluff

- How the Western Press Covered Up

NADER'S CAMPAIGN

- Is It Building a Movement?

GOD'S COUNTRY

- Lieberman Tears Up the Constitution

HIS HIDDEN TALENT

- Bush as Press Critic

PANAM 103 Trial: The Case Falls Apart

A terrible realisation is spreading through the prosecution team in the trial of the two Libyans accused of the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 in December 1988. Eleven years after the plane blew up over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people including 189 Americans, and nine years after the US and British governments announced with brazen certitude that the perpetrators had been identified, the prosecution case is collapsing.

After an initial burst of coverage in which the guilt of the accused was taken as a given, press interest has faded away save for the occasional muffled and misleading report on events in the courtroom at Zeist Holland, a former US airbase converted into a Scottish courthouse for the purpose of the trial. Such reticence is not surprising. After all, in the cause of bringing the accused to justice, the US and UK instigated UN economic sanctions on an entire country - Libya - for eight years, costing the Libyans some \$20 billion. While the embargo did not engender misery on an Iraqi scale, the price was high enough in terms of children who died because of lack of medical facilities and other cruelties.

The official western version is that the embargo worked. According to the history automatically summarized in any account of the case in the western press, Muammar Qaddafi finally caved under the pressure of sanctions and agreed to hand over the two Libyan "intelligence officers", Abdelbasset al Megrahi and Al Amin Fhimah, accused of planting the bomb. According to the indictments, they are accused of constructing the infernal device and hiding it inside a Toshiba cassette player which they then packed in a suit-

case and loaded on a flight from Malta to Frankfurt, Germany on December 21 1988. Thanks to fake luggage tags, the case was then allegedly forwarded to London and finally onto Pan Am 103 for the fatal flight to New York.

So much for the official version. In reality, it was not Qaddafi who caved in agreeing to the conditions for a trial, but the British and American governments. The UN sanctions were explicitly aimed at forcing the Libyan leader to hand over the suspects for trial in the US or Scotland, which has a different legal system from England. Qaddafi, sensibly enough, had no intention of permitting of allowing them to appear before one of the kangaroo courts customarily employed in the US for trying terrorist cases. He was hardly more attracted by the prospect of a Scottish jury inflamed by years of prejudicial press coverage. As long ago as January, 1994, however both the Libyan government and the accused's Libyan lawyers affirmed in writing that they would be prepared to agree to a trial under Scots law before a court headed by a Scottish judge (assisted by a panel of judges from other countries) in a neutral country.

Robert Black, Professor of Law at the University of Edinburgh, who formulated this compromise, brought the proposal to the British Foreign Office in London. "I was told", he informs CounterPunch, "basically, to 'fuck off.'" This obdurate official line persisted for the next four years. In the meantime, British intelligence was working on an alternative approach. According to the whistle-blowing former British intelligence officer David Shayler, (Lockerbie continued on page 5)

Our Little Secrets

A REASON TO LIKE BUSH

By his low standards George W. Bush gave a major policy address on the communications industry in early September. Just before a campaign speech in Illinois, Bush whispered to his running mate Dick Cheney: "There's Adam Clymer, major league asshole from the New York Times." Cheney responded, "Oh yeah, he is, big time." Bush and Cheney were unaware that the microphone in front of them was open.

We hope this is only the keynote for more extended criticisms of the Fourth Estate by the floundering Texas governor. The last Republican candidate to lay into the press at the national level was Spiro Agnew, Nixon's running mate. But his labored formulations ("nattering nabobs of negativism") lacked Bush's pithy precision. CounterPunch's only quibble: as an asshole Clymer is surely minor league compared with political panjandrums like R.W. Apple Jr or David Broder. As a fiscally conservative Republican, Bush should be particularly careful about devaluing the currency of abuse.

GOD TALK

Remember the days when liberal

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groups screamed with alarm on a daily basis about the onrush of the Christian right and raised millions by playing on the fear that Pat Robertson would seize power and force God's way down the throats of all freedom-loving Americans?

On August 27 at the Fellowship Chapel Church in Detroit, Democratic candidate for veep Joe Lieberman declared, "The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, not freedom from religion". Lieberman nominated the Judeo-Christian God as the basis of morality and the spiritual engine of our society. "As a people", he said, "we need to reaffirm our faith and renew the dedication of our nation and ourselves to God and God's purpose."

So much for the separation of church and state. On its face, Lieberman's interpretation of the First Amendment's position on state support for religion is ludicrous. The First Amendment is scarcely obscure: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Lieberman appears to be entirely ignorant of the history of American common law and of democratic principles expressed in the Constitution and expanded thereafter.

Such principles allowed Americans to think as they pleased so long as they didn't harm other people or break the law. What Lieberman is proposing is a throwback to the notion of religious-based 'ethical unity' prevalent before the American Revolution.

The liberal response to Lieberman's astounding assertions has been wretchedly feeble. If such words had come out of the mouth of Pat Buchanan or Pat Robertson, groups such as People for the American Way would have rushed to sound the alarm. It's an odd day when one has to cite the Anti Defamation League for doing the (obviously) right thing, since it almost never does. But on August 28 the ADL published an open letter denouncing Lieberman's use of the elections to promote religion. The signatories, ADL National Chairman Howard Berkowitz and National Director Abraham Foxman, wrote, "The First Amendment requires that government neither support one religion over another nor the religious over the nonreligious.... The United States is made

up of many different types of people from different backgrounds and different faiths, including individuals who do not believe in any god, and none of our citizens, including atheistic Americans, should be made to feel outside of the electoral or political process." B'nai B'rith, the parent group of the ADL, hastily dissociated itself from Berkowitz and Foxman.

In Detroit on Labor Day, Lieberman said to workers, "If you see men and women as created in the image of God, then you will not treat them as extensions of machines, as pure things to take advantage of, and that is what the labor movement is about, justice to people, fairness to people."

Note the senator's vagueness. Why not a few words about labor and the WTO, labor and the flight of jobs overseas? Politicians talk about God and morality as a way to avoid confronting truly unmentionable topics in this election, like trade or who's getting richer and who isn't. To get details on these topics you have to listen to Ralph Nader, not only the first Arab-American to run for the presidency but the first in many years to spare us all talk about God.

DAVID WHACKS GOLIATH

Here, from Susan Davis, who back in issue #4 (Feb 16-29 of this year), gave CounterPunchers a very fine account of the destruction of Carmel Mountain in San Diego County, is the story of an incredible victory won by a tiny group going up against some of the biggest landowners and developers in Southern California, and a county government that is almost entirely dominated by them.

At stake: the rolling grasslands and oak covered foothills of what San Diegans call the back country, its pastures carrying not only cattle but live oak, golden eagles and mountain lion.

Over the past ten years, Save Our Forests and Ranchlands, run by Duncan McFetridge, a woodworker living in Descanso, 40 miles east of San Diego, has been waging a stubborn campaign against the suburbanization of the back country. Save Our Forests put together a coalition of enviro and community groups and sued the county for failing to protect the back country. In 1996, superior court judge Judith McConnell found that San Diego county grossly negligent, in violation of state laws and its own environmental standards. The judge gave Save Our Forests and Ranchlands authority over hun-

At stake: the rolling grasslands and oak-covered foothills of what San Diegans call the back country, its pastures carrying not only cattle but live oak and golden eagles, profuse other bird life, mountain lion.

dreds of thousands of back country acres.

Finally, earlier this year, the county came up with a plan. It assumed a leveling to bare earth of all the 200,000 acres of rangelands, with division of this savaged terrain into 10- and 40-acre parcels, demurely described as small farms. The real future under the county plan would be luxury ranchettes and theme parks linked by new freeways and serviced by off-ramp commerce. Not to be defeated, Save Our Forests and its allies brought the new plan to the attention of the EPA.

On March 31 Nancy Woo, the agency's regional chief, sent a letter to the San Diego county supervisors, also to Mayor Susan Golding, advising them that the plan threatened the quality and quantity of the region's water and would gravely effect air, endangered wildlife and open space.

Woo's letter threw the county officials into desperation. It looked as though the scheming of years had gone for naught. Then, at the last minute, came an amazing gift from the EPA. Five days later, on the eve of a crucial april 5 meeting, Woo rushed another letter to the frantic San Diego officials. She said she had misinterpreted the plan, and that her first letter should be disregarded.

The supervisors were off the hook and delightedly passed the amendment that could mean that San Diego's backcountry will disappear into condoland, interspersed with Indian casinos.

But the game was not quite over. Because the county was still under court supervision, the rezoning of the agricultural preserve lands had to be approved by Judge McConnell. McFetridge fired off letters to Woo, telling her she'd been had by the county boys. He got a legal challenge to the county's plan on McConnell's docket, and collected a hot-shot environmental legal team willing to take the case on contingency. He and his friends, many of them scientists, mounted a letter-writing and media campaign to get the story out, and they lined up their troops. The suit was joined by nine other groups statewide. (The Endangered Habitats League, a southern California so-called "moderate" green group that takes money from the

Irvine and Hewlett foundations, refused to swing its considerable resources behind the suit.)

Save Our Forests began to work on California Attorney General Bill Lockyer's office to take a look at the rezoning, and lo! Lockyer joined the suit on the grounds that the county was violating the California Environmental Quality Act and posing a statewide threat to natural resources. And, almost unbelievably, Nancy Woo sent a third letter, saying she didn't wish to be misunderstood: the EPA remained very concerned about the plan's threat to reservoirs and water quality in a region of three million people.

Comes the hearing before grey-eyed Athena in the person of the formidable Judge McConnell. At issue was only a narrow question of administrative law: whether San Diego County had sufficiently studied the impacts of the proposed zoning change, and come up with efforts to mitigate those impacts, as required by California law. The county's attorney offered what observers agreed was the Alfred E. Neuman defense: "What, me worry?" The area to be moved out of agricultural protection was so large, she argued, that it couldn't be adequately studied, and so the supervisors had not bothered to try. They simply drew up a one-page list of endangered and threatened species, natural and cultural resources they thought might possibly be found on 191,000 acres of back country, and assumed this would all be destroyed in a worst-case scenario. Since they couldn't predict for certain what kind of uses would be found for the rezoned land — "well, that land has never been gated communities or golf courses in the past, your honor..." — they thought that nothing could nor should be done to stop this. Save Our Forest's lawyers made mincemeat of this argument. Judge McConnell agreed. On August 31, she declared the county's general plan inadequate, and sent the Alfred E. Neumans back to the drawing board, again. The group retains authority over 191,000 acres.

In some ways, it's a limited victory. The county can re-do its silly environmental impact report, using its usual upside-

down assumptions applied by rent-a-consultants, and resubmit it. But now the Attorney General and the EPA are watching. The board of supervisors has been given a major black eye. McFetridge's Rural Heritage and Watershed Initiative, which would impose an urban boundary much like Portland's development line, over the back country, was defeated by torrents of Building Industry Association money in 1998. It may be back on the table.

But most important of all, this tiny group of people — without any fancy foundation grants, maxxed out on their credit cards, working day jobs and living on the edge — used their solidarity to defeat a disaster. Score a huge one for SOFAR.

EDITORS ON TOUR

CounterPunch editors Cockburn and St Clair will be on the road for the next couple of months, talking about their new book *Al Gore: A User's Manual*, published by Verso and available at a big discount if you call 1-800-840-3683, or clip the coupon on the yellow insert in this issue. Check our website www.counterpunch.org for the full tour schedule or call our 800 number. This month: Sep 18th, Elliot Bay Books in Seattle, 7.30pm; 19th, UW bookstore, Seattle, 7pm; 20th, Portland, OR, place TBA, check site or phone no; 21st, Eugene, Hungry Head, 7pm; 26th, Fort Bragg, CA, town hall, corner Main & Laurel, 7pm; 27th, Ukiah, CA, noon, call 707-468-1660; 28th, Tempe, AZ, Memorial Union Cinema, at ASU, 6pm. October schedule in the next CounterPunch.

Welcome Rico Cleffi as a contributor. We met young Rico, now working in New York and originally from New Bedford, when co-editor Cockburn took part in early August in the first full session of the Kopkind Colony in Guilford, Vermont, named for our dear friend, the late great radical journalist Andrew K. The colony, organized by John Scagliotti and JoAnn Wypijewski, is designed to offer a week's worth of instructive talk amid pleasant surroundings for young organizers and journalists on the left. Out of the colony will come scores, ultimately hundreds of bright, dedicated folk linked to each other and to ancient mariners of our crowd. CP

Is It a Movement?

The Nader Campaign

BY RICO CLEFFI

Jan Pierce is one of several factors that make the Nader presidential bid a victory in itself. Pierce could easily find other ways to spend his time; in 1996 he retired from forty years in the labor movement, including a stint as Vice President of CWA District 1. When the Nader campaign offered him the position of Labor Liaison, he couldn't say no—he even refused to take any type of stipend. “Maybe I’m trying to redeem myself from forty years in Democratic politics.” He’s not entirely joking.

The veteran organizer has no illusions about winning the labor leadership over to the campaign. “I wanted a challenge, and I got it.” But Jan Pierce is no Sisyphus, nor is he performing penance for his past sins. Through his involvement in the campaign, he hopes to help build the labor movement into a fighting force, a process he thinks involvement with the Democrats will only impede.

And so far, he’s been “absolutely overwhelmed by the reception we’re getting at the rank and file level”. In keeping with the decentralized nature of the Nader campaign, Pierce’s organizing efforts are based in Ohio, not Washington. He likes working with the Greens, but admits that he “probably would have rather had a better vehicle, a labor party, although we couldn’t have a better candidate”. As for the actual Labor Party, founder and head Tony Mazocchi spoke at the Green convention, but his party isn’t offering outright endorsements of other parties’ candidates.

Labor for Nader committees are currently in formation in Boston, Detroit, Madison, Toledo and San Francisco. Dan McCarthy, president of United Auto Workers local #417 in Detroit—along with two other UAW local presidents, and a Steel Workers’ local president—is part of a Detroit Labor for Nader committee that’s about to go public. McCarthy is fully behind Nader, whose platform he sees as “the only message that resonates with working people”.

The Labor for Nader committees are making the most of the fact that aside from a few small locals—and the occasional

anomaly, like the California Nurses Association—the official labor leadership will be backing Gore. They’ve been forced to get out into their respective communities—car shows, parades, train and bus stations, sports facilities, libraries—anywhere they can reach regular people. What kind of alliances will survive the election; what kind of spaces are opened up for new issues to be discussed; what type of new strategies can be forged? Pierce is enthusiastic: “I think the story on the day after the election is that voters are no longer captive to the one party/two name system. To be able to bring the union movement into that process is going to bring handsome dividends.”

Longtime Boston community activist and Rainbow Coalition founder Mel King has a similar take on things. King has been an articulate critic of the ways in which the Rainbow Coalition was swallowed by the Jesse Jackson campaign, and thinks the

some polls. Flurries of activity in remote neighborhoods like West Queens, NY, or support for Nader on Verizon picket lines are hard to quantify, in terms of long-term payoff.

This type of unpredictable support fits well with the general tone of the campaign—erratic, rough around the edges, real. Sometimes the issues overlap with the campaign, sometimes they don’t. In DC, the Statehood Greens have long been embroiled in community politics (and of course, the struggle for actual political representation), notably around public school politics.

Illinois Greens successfully sued that state’s Board of Elections for not allowing them on the ballot, and have been active in direct action to save hardwood trees. In Chicago, anti-police brutality work, campaigns against gay bashing, and the fight against gentrification in the city’s Maxwell Street, “University Village” area are helping to gain momentum.

Vermont’s Progressive Party is well organized, pushes universal health care and living wages, and expects to win one or two more legislative seats. Three years

“Maybe I’m trying to redeem myself from forty years in Democratic politics.”

Nader campaign’s greatest hope is in the movement it will foster on the ground—not in Nader himself.

King and the Rainbow are endorsing Nader and have been out in the streets getting signatures and doing outreach among different community groups, including the NAACP. For King, the post-election period will be a time in which the various forces coming together in Boston “will continue to work on the issues; the Rainbow and the Greens will hammer out a strategy for economic justice issues, healthcare, discriminatory issues that exist in terms of employment—day to day issues—stating these issues in terms that people are clear about, using the resources we have to achieve these goals”.

One common Green theme is fighting to get Nader into this fall’s official presidential debates. Thus far, Green organizers hope to be on the ballot in most states, are currently on almost 30 and are hopeful they can achieve the 5% of the vote needed to win federal funding for the next election. Nader has hit as high as 10% in

ago, the Progressives won a campaign finance law that puts a ceiling of \$50 on campaign contributions, limits the number of contributions, and allows for matching funds up to \$265,000. Come November, Nader will be on the Vermont ballot on the Progressive line.

So far this year Nader has visited Vermont twice, both times helping to boost local campaigns, especially that of gubernatorial candidate Anthony Pollina. The campaign has also hooked up with a student liaison, who is hard at work making inroads among anti-sweatshop groups and other campus activists. And then there’s the question of healthcare. During the Republican Convention demonstrations in Philadelphia, Nader’s people made up about one third of the ranks at the healthcare rally, at which Nader spoke. Diane Lardy, the National coordinator of the Universal Healthcare 2000 (U2K) campaign sees Nader as more of a vehicle for cracking open the debate on the issue than anything else. CP

(Lockerbie continued from page 1). MI-6 was fomenting a plot to kill Qaddafi, contingent on a promise by the conspirators to hand over Megrahi and Fhimah once they had taken power in Tripoli.

In the fall of 1997 however, it became apparent in London and Washington that they might have to agree to a trial under Qaddafi's conditions after all. Nelson Mandela threw his significant political weight behind the compromise, while the Organisation of African States stated that they would soon cease to cooperate with the sanctions. Accordingly, British foreign secretary Robin Cook summoned Andrew Hardie, the Lord Advocate of Scotland (roughly equivalent to the US attorney general), who had strenuously maintained that the neutral country option was legally inadmissible, and informed him that Britain and the US were now prepared prepared to accept this plan. "Over my dead body, foreign secretary", the outraged Hardie exclaimed. "That, Andrew, can be arranged", replied Cook smoothly.

In August 1998 the British and Americans announced that they would be prepared to hold a trial under Scottish law in a neutral country in front of an all Scottish panel of judges (the only deviation from the 1994 proposal). Professor Black has related to us how he journeyed to the Libyan leader's tent, deep in the desert, to discuss the announcement. Qaddafi had been glued to CNN, watching Clinton's grand jury appearance in the Lewinsky affair. "These things happen, men will be men," he said indulgently. "But what was absolutely outrageous was that he was on the phone with important foreign leaders while this was going on. It should be cut off!"

In April, 1999, Megrahi and Fhimah arrived in Holland. While a crescendo of spin from Washington and London affirmed that this was a notable victory, a Scottish police source tells CounterPunch that the reaction from inside the prosecution team was "a resounding 'Oh shit'". The fact of the matter was that the Scots prosecutors suspected that they had a weak case, based in important respects on assurances from the US that they had the incriminating evidence ready to hand. "They were promised evidence that was 24 carat kosher", a source close to the Scottish police tells CounterPunch, "but what they got was lead wrapped in bacon rind."

In essence, the case was based on the presumption that (a) the timer for the bomb was from a batch sold by a Swiss firm to

Deep in the desert, Qaddafi had been glued to CNN, watching Clinton's grand jury appearance in the Lewinsky affair.

Libya, (b) that fragments of clothing retrieved from the crash site and identified as having been in the suitcase that contained the bomb had been bought by the accused Megrahi from a shop in Malta, (c) that Fhimah's diary revealed a guilty interest in obtaining Air Malta luggage tags and (d) that a "secret witness", Abdulmajid Giacka, a former colleague of the accused pair in the Libyan Airlines office on Malta, would testify that he had observed them either constructing the bomb or at least seen them loading it on the plane to Frankfurt.

Unfortunately for the official case, the evidence so far has failed to substantiate any of the salient points. Edwin Bollier, the Swiss manufacturer of the timing device at issue, testified that he sold timers of similar type to the East Germans, their ultimate destination unknown. In the course of his testimony it emerged that Bollier had been connected to many intelligence agencies, including both the Libyans and the CIA. The Maltese shopkeeper could say only that Megrahi "resembled" the man who bought the clothes, refusing to identify him positively as the purchaser. Fhimah's diary has yet to be introduced in evidence (it was obtained without a warrant) but it is known that his references to luggage tags are clearly linked to a money-making scheme on his part to print Air Malta tags for the Libyan airline.

This brings us to Giacka, the mystery witness. Since 1991 he has been living under witness protection in the United States. He has so far received a combined stipend of \$320,000 from his hosts. Should the accused be convicted, he stands to collect up to \$4 million in reward money. Lawyers for the defense formed the impression that he might be less than a formidable witness for the prosecution when they came to Washington in November 1999 to "precognose" him, as is their right under Scottish law. On arrival, they were blindfolded by the FBI and driven around suburban Washington for some hours in a closed truck. When they were finally permitted to remove their blindfolds they beheld a figure wearing a false beard and a "Shirley Bassey type wig."

Questioned by the Scots, Giacka de-

clared that the most he could affirm was that he had seen the accused, with a suitcase, in the neighborhood of the Malta airport luggage area, the day before the bombing. It may well be that in the months succeeding his interview with the lawyers Giacka has been encouraged by his hosts to be more assertive in his testimony. He is now at Zeist, guarded by 30 armed US Marshals, but his evidence has been delayed thanks to the discovery by the defense that Giacka had been a CIA informant since August 1988, i.e., four months before the bombing. This revelation raises the obvious question as to why, if he was in touch with the Americans at the time of the bombing, the Libyans were not tied into Lockerbie until 1991.

Prior to Giacka's appearance in the box, the defense subpoenaed CIA cables mentioning him. Copies of agency communications were duly presented, with large portions blacked out. The prosecution, who admitted having seen the cables in their entirety, swore blind that the concealed passages contained nothing of any relevance to the case. The judges were unimpressed and directed that the defense

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be allowed to see them.

It transpired that the blacked out portions contained much of relevance, including Giacka's demands for money and CIA assistance in helping him evade the Libyan military draft, as well as an agency officer's comment that his reliability was very much open to question. Furthermore, they also indicated that the CIA had not, despite sworn statements to the contrary, handed over their entire file on Giacka. The judges accordingly have recessed the court until late September while spook archivists assemble the full file. It was at this point, in late August, that a senior prosecution official began to remark dole-

motive for an attack on an American airliner, following the destruction of an Iranian airbus over the Persian Gulf carrying 290 passengers, including 66 children on July 3, 1988. The US Navy missile cruiser Vincennes had casually blown it out of the sky despite clear indications that it was a civilian plane. Afterwards, the US Navy concealed the fact that the Vincennes had been in Iranian territorial waters at the time, refused to admit error or pay compensation, and handed out medals to the ship's officers for heroism in combat.

The initial US and British investigations pointed clearly to a case against the Iranians as having contracted with the

attacks in Sweden and Denmark. In March 1989 however, Margaret Thatcher called George Bush to discuss the case. The two leaders agreed that it was important to "cool it" on the Iranian angle, since they were in no position to punish the Tehran regime, which had just survived the eight year war with US/UK-sponsored Iraq.

Following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, it became more imperative than ever to obfuscate any suspicion of Iranian complicity in Lockerbie, given the importance of Iranian assistance for the upcoming war with Saddam Hussein. Thus the perennial "rogue", Muammar Qaddafi, was drafted as the suspect of

When they removed their blindfolds they beheld a figure wearing a false beard and a "Shirley Bassey type wig". This was the CIA's mystery witness.

fully that that the case was "always a matter of circumstance", meaning they had never had more than circumstantial evidence, a shaky basis for embargoing an entire country for nearly a decade.

A former CIA official and Friend of CounterPunch, who took part in the original investigation of Pan Am 103, tells us that, should the entire agency file be disclosed, it will provide damning evidence that "the Libyans never were directly involved in the Lockerbie bombing". In fact, the evidence in the agency's possession points more clearly in the direction of the original suspects in the case, members of a group known as the PFLP-GC closely linked to Iran. The Iranians had a clear

Lebanese-based PFLP-GC, or a section thereof, to exact revenge. Two months before Lockerbie, the Germans had arrested members of this group outside Dusseldorf as they were preparing bombs specifically designed to bring down airliners. US intelligence had traced a payment of \$500,000 into the account of a professional bomber named Abu Talb, in April 1989. Shown a picture of Talb by a British reporter in 1990, the Maltese shopkeeper who sold the clothes found in the bomb-suitcase declared that he "most resembled" the purchaser. The Scottish police had at one point been about to charge Talb, who since 1989 has been serving time in a Swedish jail for a series of bomb

choice. Should the CIA now refuse to hand over what would amount to its entire Lockerbie file, the defense will have clear grounds to ask for a dismissal of the charges. Should the case proceed, it seems highly unlikely that the judges would be able to find any basis for a guilty verdict. Thanks to the fog of ignorance and uninterest that has characterized coverage of Zeist in this country, the consequent acquittal will most likely be explained away as caused by "technicalities", along with outraged editorials about "letting Qaddafi off the hook". In any event, it seems clear that the US security services will never again allow one of their terrorist cases to come before an impartial court. CP

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